

BRANDON SCUBA CLUB

Volume 10, Number 1

May, 2006

I think spring has finally arrived, it is light when I go to work in the morning and come home at night, the grass is green, the tulips are up. **Time to go diving at Clear lake.**

As you will see from the upcoming events on the last page of this newsletter our first dive of the year is planned for noon on Sunday May 28th at the Glen Beag dive site at Clear Lake. We plan to replace a few boards on the dock which are showing their age and put the dive buoys in. After the dive we are planning a pot luck Bar-B-Que at one of our cabins so bring what ever you would like to BBQ, a side dish, and some liquid refreshment. I am sure we will have a great time as always.

The picture on the upper right is the island of Saba which is located near St Martin in the Dutch West Indies. The "airport" is on the lower right corner of the island and it made for an interesting landing and takeoff. The diving is great as shown in the picture of the swim through shown below. There are lots of vertical walls and pinnacles rising from amazing depths. The winter issue of Diver magazine has excellent article on Saba. Hopefully we will have a show of digital images from Saba and St. Martin at our Photo night which is going to be held in September. As I recall the last photo night we saw some excellent images from Cuba.

Take care,
Ed Burridge
burrige@mts.net



Brandon Scuba Club Meeting

7:30 PM June 14, 2006

UFCW Office

Presidents Message

I would like to thank all the volunteers of the Brandon Scuba club who gave their time and effort to make our club a success. As normal they were there for the Christmas party and to sell tickets at Houston's. As good corporate citizens we gave the proceeds to Brandon Humane Society and the Brandon Sun Kids.

As usual we had quite a few divers during spring holidays that went south for their winter fix. Everybody came back safe and sound, which is a good thing.

Finally summer is around the corner, the days are getting longer, and we don't have to wear heavy clothes just to stay warm. We don't have to socialise between four walls, so let's make the best of the short summer we have. This summer lets plan to meet at the lake to do some diving, practice our skills and meet other people with similar interests. The opportunity is there for every one of us to get involved in what we enjoy this summer. The club is planning some dives and "after dive" get togethers to meet each other. Lets dust off our equipment, check it and make sure that it is in top condition for this summer. Equipment failure at forty feet below spoils a good dive, which is a bad thing.

If anybody has a good idea for the club we would like to hear about it. We have some new event co-ordinators that have fresh new ideas so lets help them.

Camil Brodeur

Winnipeggers out West!!

Kevin and Jan Breckman are now operating a Dive and Tour Boat service out of Horseshoe Bay, Vancouver, BC.

Kevin may be remembered by the many students he taught while working at Three Fathoms in the 1980's. He and Jan were also the co-founders of the short lived Dive Resort in Garson, MB called Crystal Springs Resort. They were also owners and SSI Dive Instructors at a Winnipeg Dive Store on Portage Avenue called the Manitoba Institute of Scuba Instruction.

For many years Kevin and Jan had moved down to Florida where they ran a Dive Tour operation but they have since returned to Canada to run Dive Charters from their boat "The Sea Dragon" The retail rate is \$85.00 for a two tank dive for individuals and \$75.00 for a two tank dive for groups of six or more. Tell them that your from Manitoba and I'm sure there will be some sort of a discount.

Whether going by yourself or setting up a group dive, I can guarantee you that Kevin and Jan will show you a good time and some great diving. Look them up on their Web Page at www.blueadventure.ca

Does anyone out there know the whereabouts or well being of other Manitobans that moved to the West Coast? Whatever happened to Chris Miller who owned the "Sea Venture" Dive and Tour boat, and what about Jack Hoban who was giving tours and training from a two person wet-sub?

If you know about them please let us know so we can feature them and others in future newsletters.



Canadian Amphibious Search Team
Central Region
By Ken Lugg

In this second installment, in a series of articles about the Canadian Amphibious Search Team Central Region, I hope to provide more insight into the team, our members, and our goals. The success of our team is very much dependant on each and every member. But that is only the beginning. We cannot achieve any level of success without the support of private and corporate citizens, who have thrown their support behind us.

In the previous newsletter, I told you about how we started, our first mission, and the expansion of the team to include several new members. We continued to train, while waiting for the next call for assistance from a family.

Brandon

The Brandon mission can only be described as a tragedy. Actually all water related deaths are tragedies. It is what drives our team. To assist the family, provide them information, search, and recover. That is what CAST CR is about. Unfortunately all our stories are sad. It is only with the recovery we can bring closure, and in a different way bring some happiness.

On October 24th, 2003, Dana Quewezance, who was 20 years old headed from Estevan, Saskatchewan to Brandon, Manitoba. Dana headed to Brandon with a group of friends to celebrate a friends' birthday. After an evening of celebration and fellowship the evening took a sad direction. As Dana and three other friends, walked through an empty field toward Eleanor Kidd Park, one of the guys spotted headlights. All of these fellows assumed the headlights were that of a police car. Dana said he would draw the police away, and ran across the road, and then jumped into the cold Assiniboine River. The headlights were from a passing vehicle. There was no police car. There was no need for a diversion. Dana was a happy-go-lucky athletic young man, who was now in trouble. His friends tried to assist and save him but to no avail.

The Brandon Police Service were called, and together with the Brandon Fire Department attended the scene and searched frantically for Dana. Their search would be all for not. The Brandon Police Service does not have a dive team, and now called upon the RCMP URT (Underwater Recovery Team).

The RCMP conducted two searches for Dana. One search was based on the last seen point. They covered the area well, leaving no stone unturned. Duties pre-empted further search, and the team was called away. The team was called back again. On their second search, the search area was determined by a 'shaman'. A 'shaman' is a 'medicine man' or 'spiritual' advisor. The RCMP dive team searched the next area thoroughly. This was some distance from the last seen point, and was contrary to where the RCMP wanted to search next. The search turned up empty, and the team returned to their home detachments. The Mounties left, wanting to return. Over the few days, senior officers decided the dive team had done all they could. The RCMP search was over. On December 1st, 2003, the Brandon Police Service contacted CAST CR. They advise that the RCMP are not returning, and the search is officially abandoned. This is one of our codicils. We will not dive until 'official' agencies have abandoned the search. Our team had been quietly 'spinning up' for this mission in the background. The river had started to freeze in November, and we determined, it would be safer to conduct the mission once the river freezes over completely. The ice would provide the perfect diving platform.

As we are volunteers, and the 'liability' issues of having CAST CR dive and search on behalf of the Brandon Police Service was prohibitive, we had to conduct our search independently. The Brandon Police Service stated they would monitor our search, and would provide assistance and whatever logistical support was needed. The Brandon Fire Department offered their hall for hanging and drying gear, and if required, breathing air. The family at the moment, had no money to covers the costs of the diving operation. Our team does not charge for the diving, and no members of CAST CR receive any remuneration. However there are primary costs to the operation, being accommodations, food, and fuel. This is why our fundraisers are so important. Further, this is why our corporate, and private citizen sponsorship is important to our team. This operation was no frills, as all our operations are. Prior to heading Brandon, several people offered assistance. The Redwood Inn provided 'special rates', and Cam Clark Ford Superstore provided a new 4X4 truck to haul our gear. Canad Inns gave us \$500.00 to cover fuel, and other costs. The Brandon Police Association also chipped into the operation, along with John Sinopoli, from Toronto, ON, who contributed cash. George Pike from Quest Investigations and Richard Cassidy from the law firm Cassidy Ramsay also contributed monies. CAST CR also received donated digital orthoimagery files, and hard copy maps from Atlis Geomatics.

On Friday, December 5th, 2003 we sent an 'advance party' to Brandon. They were to assess the scene, liaise with police and fire officials, and most importantly interview critical witnesses to determine a Last Seen Point (LSP). It is important to note that from the time the drowning occurred, Dana's family, and friends were conducting their own searches everyday, all day. They all moved to Brandon, and stayed in hotels. They combed the riverbanks. Searching.....Hoping.....

Our team of four CAST CR members spent the day in Brandon interviewing police officers, and most importantly the witnesses to the drowning. We were also fortunate enough to have details of the RCMP dive team search area. The RCMP URT (Underwater Recovery Team) was very helpful in providing this information. Our team had the advantage to actually talk to the witnesses who were from Estevan, SK, and 'hindsight' of the RCMP dive team search. Our advance party members also set up modular heated tentage, and then awaited the arrival of six more CAST CR members the next morning.

On Saturday morning the rest of the team arrived. We set up our gear, and then received a briefing from our advance party. We walked through the site, and then determined where we would cut the hole for our penetration ice diving operation. We also wanted to minimize the number of 'hazards' we created, by not cutting an excessive number of holes. The last thing we would want is a snowmobiler, people, or animals to go through the ice.

By 10:30am, we commenced diving operations. The Assiniboine River is a muddy polluted river. This dive would prove to be a challenging technical dive, with severe environmental conditions. Having said that, being prepared, having all the right equipment, and a crew of ten divers made this operation run very smooth. One at a time divers were launched into the darkness of the Assiniboine River. To feel around on the bottom with no visibility, all the while the safety diver was at the ready.



Starting the search, on the frozen Assiniboine River near Eleanor Kidd Park

As solo divers took turns searching the muddy bottom, all of a sudden the tender received 5 pulls on the line. We had found Dana. After 3 hours 10 minutes of elapsed time we could give the much needed closure to the family that had lined the shores of the river. Police were summoned, and immediately the river became a center of activity. Uniform police officers, police detectives, first responders and the medical examiner crowded the scene. Dana was recovered 41 days after he drowned.

CAST CR members were elated we had success, and the family was very grateful. But the search and recovery of Dana Quewezance was not just something the CAST CR team had accomplished alone. It was the culmination of all previous search efforts, by police, and family, supported by other stakeholders who believed in the ideals of our team, and the importance of our mission.

Technology and other stuff...

In September of 2004 the team acquired exclusive use of a JW FISHERS TOV-1 boat deployed video system. The unit is rated to operate in up to 500fsw, and contains a black and white video camera. The TOV-1 is tethered to the boat and while two tenders manage the TOV-1, another diver watches a small black and white monitor showing the detail of the bottom. This unit can be towed by a vessel, or utilized in a drop-video technique. The TOV-1 will be a great asset to the team.



Humminbird 987C SI

In the spring of 2005, CAST CR received one of the first of four Humminbird 987C SI units that arrived in Canada. CAST CR, in partnership with Humminbird have been field testing this unit to determine its use in the recovery of drowning victims. So far the unit has proven itself in locating submerged stolen vehicles in the Red River, an initiative that CAST CR is working on together with the Winnipeg Police Service Underwater Search and Recovery Unit.

This unit works in conventional fish locator mode, side imaging mode, or tracking mode. The unit has built in GPS, and can work split screens between several functions.



CAST CR Trailer

We also had a desperate need for a way to store, secure, and transport our gear. To that end we have purchased a 14ft cargo trailer, which we hope to pay for through sponsorships. For more information on trailer sponsorship contact Ken Lugg @299-6074 or Howard Rybuck @228-4880.



Recruitment.....DIVE TEAM and SURFACE SUPPORT

CAST CR is always looking for a few good men and women. For more information, check out our website at www.castcentral.ca, or talk to one of the team members. Because of the large amount of interest we have received, we have changed to one annual selection process. Throughout the year we gather resumes from divers, who desire to be divers or surface support team members on CAST CR. Resumes received prior to April 15th each year are reviewed.

Hey folks,

Just a friendly reminder to service your diving gear; take advantage of the off season or before you head out to a warm destination. Here are some simple things you can check and do that will help maintain your diving equipment for many years to come.

Regulators:

- Remember to rinse your regulators with fresh water after every dive especially after pool and salt water dives. This gets rid of any silt, dirt, rocks, chlorine, grass and other foreign objects that may promote the premature failure of the reg system. Ensure the dust cover is in place so as to not let water into the reg system
- Occasionally check your hoses for cracks or pinched bends at the connection points. Hose protectors are a good item that prolongs the life of the regulator hoses.
- Keep an eye out for corrosion left on the regulator, usually a crusty build up that can have many colours - most commonly white, green and blue. Also check the filter of the first stage. Often times it gets clogged with corrosion or other debris which limits the overall performance of the reg. These are good indications that the internal regulator components need to be serviced. Your local dive shop can perform these services for you.
- Mouth pieces are often an overlooked component. It is a good idea to replace them when they become overly chewed. There are many different types of mouth pieces out there so feel free to change to a mouth piece that is more comfortable for your mouth and jaw.

BCD's

- Buoyancy Compensating Devices are generally trouble free until that one day you're out for the greatest dive ever and the valve sticks! What an awful feeling to be 40 feet down and the inflate button is stuck. Not to worry though we have all been trained to deal with just that type of situation. Here's a few tricks that can prevent such an event
- Just like all of your dive gear remember to rinse the BCD with fresh water after every dive.
- Every so often check for worn or frayed stitching in the straps and buckles. These can be fixed easily.
- Check and clean out the grass and other tidbits that make a home in your "Velcro" straps. It is truly amazing how well the straps work when they are clean.
- Check your power inflator and all dump valves for proper function. Does it seal right away? Are there any leaks from the valves when the BCD is 3/4 full? Sticky buttons can be a culprit. But luckily it is easy and cheap to maintain.

Computers

- Change the battery when the computer indicates that it has a low battery. Most computers use batteries that can be found at electronic stores or your local dive shop.
- Remember to log all your dives in your log book. A great way to remember and share the great dive trips of your life.

FINS

- Fins need some TLC too! Just remember the frustration of loading up all your gear and toys onto your shoulders and hobbling over to the waters edge only to have one fin strap snap into oblivion. Here are a few tips to prolong your fin strap life.
- Try not to over tighten the straps, they only need to be snug.
- Check the fit of the fins before your dive and adjust as required
- There are alternate fin straps on the market such as steel springs, They will last even longer than rubber straps and are much easier to put on and off in the water. These straps are available at any local dive shop or can be custom made to fit you (ask me how).

Masks and Snorkels

- Cleanliness is key to masks and snorkels, rinse rinse rinse!
- Soap and water removes most grime from the mask and snorkel.
- Troubles getting at the grime between the lens and skirt? Is it getting hairy? For \$2 I will make your mask look like new.

Wet Suits and other Neoprene gear

- Rinse the neoprene with fresh water after every dive and hang to dry.
- Notice a funny smell form your neoprene? Neoprene cleaners and de-odorizes can be found in any local dive shop. Simply fill the bucket or tub and let your stuff soak for a bit. Voila, no more stink!
- Occasionally check for rips or tears in the neoprene, these can be fixed and reinforced by your local dive shop
- Zipper sticking? Use an old tooth brush and some soap and water to scrub out the dirt and hair that may be in the way.

Flashlights and other Sealed Accessories

- Check and clean all threaded attachments with soap and water to remove grime build up.
- Inspect and clean o-rings regularly. If the o-ring looks cracked or deformed a replacement can be found at your local dive shop
- Flooded lights can be saved! Quickly remove the batteries and let the flash light's insides dry out. Before next use, contact me for a check up.

If you have any questions or would like to be removed from my mail list please feel free to email me at cstringam@shaw.ca. If you liked what you see here please pass it along to other divers.

Stay tuned for future Dive Community updates!

***Brandon Scuba Club
Upcoming Events***

- | | | |
|--------------------|---|---|
| May 28, 2006 | - | Repair Dock/Put Dive Buoys in |
| | - | Glen Beag dive site |
| | - | High Noon |
| | - | Bar-B-Que to follow (bring own meat and side dish for Pot Luck) |
| June 14, 2006 | - | BSC meeting |
| | - | 7:30 p.m. UFCW Office |
| July 15, 2006 | - | Come Celebrate Parks Day at Glen Beag |
| | - | Special events dive (more info to follow) |
| | - | Bar-B-Que (at Club's expense) |
| | - | High Noon |
| August 12-13, 2006 | - | Dauphin Dolphins Spearfishing Competition |
| | - | entry forms will be in the mail soon |
| September, 2006 | - | Photo night |
| | - | more info to follow |

Note: The BSC has recently purchased a one year membership to Under Current. This will be available FREE of charge to all current members. All we need is your email address and we will take care of the rest. If you would like Under Current emailed to you please email Elaine at edriesm@mts.net to be put on the list.

Interested in a Brandon Scuba Club golf shirt? If so, email Ryan at bartletter@westman.wave.ca If there is enough interest, a design will be made up and shirts ordered.

We have two NEW events chairpersons. They are Ryan Bartlette and Jason Lussier. If you have any ideas or just want to help out the guys email them at bartletter@westman.wave.ca and Lussier.JM@forces.gc.ca This is just what our club needs, fresh ideas and these guys have lots.